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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Application of Tou et al.

Art Unit 1651

Serial No. 09/541,844

Filed April 3, 2000

Confirmation No. 4246

For METHOD OF REMOVING N-TERMINAL ALANINE RESIDUES FROM
POLYPEPTIDES WITH AEROMONAS AMINOPEPTIDASE

Examiner J. Weber

April 7, 2003

RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION

TO THE COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS,

SIR:

In connection with the Request for Continued Examination being filed contemporaneously herewith, please enter the following amendments:

AMENDMENTS**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please add the following new claims:

22. (new) A method for removing an alanyl residue from the N-terminal region of a polypeptide, the method comprising expressing a polypeptide having an alanyl residue in the N-terminal region of the polypeptide and contacting the expressed polypeptide with immobilized *Aeromonas proteolytica* aminopeptidase to cleave the alanyl residue from the polypeptide.

23. (new) The method of claim 22, wherein the alanyl residue is non-native to the polypeptide.